

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY QUITO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7208

INFO DIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS CZ

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 3 QUITO 6806

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PFOR EC

SUBJECT: COUP ATTEMPT AGAINST RODRIGUEZ LARA: IT'S MEANING AND
LIKELY IMPACT ON THE STABILITY OF THE GOE

REF: A. QUITO 6652

B. QUITO 6807

C. QUITO 6808

1. SUMMARY:

A) GEN. RODRIGUEZ EMERGED THE VICTOR IN THE AUGUST 31/SEPTEMBER 1 COUP ATTEMPT AGAINST HIM BY ECUADOREAN ARMY GENERAL RAUL GONZALEZ ALVEAR. ERRONEOUSLY COUNTING ON SUPPORT DERIVED FROM DISCONTENT OVER THE ECONOMY, GONZALEZ HAD CLEARLY LOST HIS POORLY PLANNED, AND INEPTLY CONSUMMATED COUP BID BY NOON SEPTEMBER 1 AND RETREATED TO SEEK ASYLUM, FIRST FROM THE US EMBASSY AND, FINALLY, FROM THE CHILEAN.

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B) THERE IS ACCUMULATING EVIDENCE, HOWEVER, THAT THE SUPPORT

RODRIGUEZ EVENTUALLY MUSTERED TO CRUSH THE COUP ATTEMPT WAS NOT SO SOLID IN THE BEGINNING, AND THAT THERE IS STILL CONSIDERABLE DISSATISFACTION WITH PRESIDENT RODRIGUEZ AMONG THE OFFICERS CORPS. THERE IS CONTINUING TALK AMONG COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL PEOPLE ABOUT THE INEPTNESS OF MILITARY GOVERNMENTS IN MANAGING AN ECONOMY, AND POLITICIANS AND SOME NEWS MEDIA ARE COMPLAINING MORE VIGOROUSLY ABOUT THE FAILURE OF THE PRESIDENT TO SET SOME KIND OF A FIXED SCHEDULE FOR RETURN TO CONSTITUTIONAL AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT.

C) RODRIGUEZ APPEARS TO HAVE COME OUT OF THE EXPERIENCE SOMEWHAT CHASTENED, IF NOT EXACTLY CONTRITE; HIS ACTIONS SINCE SEPTEMBER 1 CONFIRM THAT HE HAS LEARNED SOME LESSONS. STRONG AND WIDESPREAD PURGES AND REPRISALS NOT BEING CONSISTENT WITH ECUADOREAN TRADITION, COMPATIBLE WITH RODRIGUEZ' PERSONALITY, NOR WITHIN HIS POWER, HE HAS SET ABOUT TO PATCH UP RUPTURES WITHIN THE ARMED FORCES AND TO PULL THE BODY POLITIC ALONG WITH HIM. HIS RECENT APPOINTMENTS, STATEMENTS AND ACTIONS ARE AIMED AT HEALING THE WOUNDS OF THE MILITARY AND TURNING THE COUNTRY AROUND ECONOMICALLY.

D) THE REAL KEY TO RODRIGUEZ LARA'S CONTINUANCE IN POWER RESTS WITHIN THE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT AND, SECONDARILY, ON HOW EFFECTIVE THE NEW CABINET IS IN BRINGING ABOUT ECONOMIC RECOVERY. MOTIVATION FOR ANOTHER ATTEMPT TO UNSEAT RODRIGUEZ COULD DERIVE FROM PERSONAL ANIMOSITY AND AMBITION OR FROM A FEELING HE IS MISMANAGING THE ARMED FORCES AND THE COUNTRY.

E) IF THE GOVERNMENT IS ABLE TO TAKE MEASURES RAPIDLY AND DECISIVELY THAT WILL TURN THE PETROLUEM REVENUES TAP BACK ON AND BOLSTER THE ECONOMY, THE PROSPECTS FOR RODRIGUEZ' CONTINUANCE ARE IMPROVED, BUT STILL NOT ASSURED. AN AMBITIOUS REVOLUTIONARY CAN ALWAYS FIND A PRETEXT FOR SAVING THE NATION.

F) THE LONGER RODRIGUEZ STAYS IN POWER, HOWEVER, THE BETTER HIS CHANCES, ESPECIALLY IF THE ECONOMY TAKES THE UPTURN IT SHOULD. THE MOST CRITICAL PERIOD IS PROBABLY DURING THE
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NEXT SIX MONTHS, BUT IF RODRIGUEZ LARA SURVIVES THIS PERIOD AND SUCCEEDS IN EFFECTING AN ECONOMIC UPTURN, HE WILL PROBABLY BE AROUND A GOOD WHILE LONGER. END SUMMARY.

2. THE UNSUCCESSFUL COUP ATTEMPT AND ITS BACKGROUND.

TO SAY THAT GONZALEZ' COUP ATTEMPT WAS "POORLY PLANNED AND INEPTLY EXECUTED" IS TO BE RATHER GENEROUS TO GONZALEZ.

HE ATTACKED A HOLLOW SHELL (THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE) WHEN RODRIGUEZ HAD EARLIER ESCAPED TO RIOBAMBA (100 MILES TO THE SOUTH) TO MUSTER SUPPORT IN CRUSHING THE COUP. GONZALEZ DID NOT MANAGE TO GAIN CONTROL (IF, INDEED, HE TRIED) OF OTHER MAJOR GOVERNMENT INSTALLATIONS, SUCH AS THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE, QUITO'S AIRPORT, BROADCASTING FACILITIES, NEWSPAPERS, ETC. GONZALEZ' MAJOR SUPPORTER IN THE CONSPIRACY (GEN. SOLIS) WAS TAKEN PRISONER BY PRO-RODRIGUEZ FORCES ALMOST BEFORE THE COUP BEGAN, WHEN SOLIS WENT TO THEIR HEADQUARTERS TO SOLICIT SUPPORT. GONZALEZ THOUGHT HE HAD MORE SUPPORT THAN IN THE END HE DID HAVE, AND THERE ARE UNCONFIRMED STORIES THAT IMPLICATE LARGE NUMBERS OF OFFICERS TO VARYING DEGREES PRIOR TO THE ACTUAL LAUNCHING OF THE COUP. WHATEVER THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER, GONZALEZ APPEARS TO HAVE MADE LITTLE EFFORT DURING THE EARLY HOURS OF THE COUP TO ENSURE THAT ANY OF THE PLEDGED SUPPORT REMAINED WITH HIM. TO THE EXTENT THAT OTHER MILITARY UNITS AND COMMANDERS HAD AGREED TO JOIN HIS EFFORT, THEY CLEARLY HAD NOT COME OUT FOR HIM WITHIN THE FIRST 12 HOURS OF THE COUP (THAT IS, BY DAWN ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 1ST), AND BY 11:30 A.M. SEPTEMBER 1, PRESIDENTIAL ADVISER GEN. CARLOS AGUIRRE WAS ABLE TO RECITE, ON NATIONAL TELEVISION, A DEVASTATING LIST OF MILITARY FORCES WHICH HAD CAST THEIR LOT WITH RODRIGUEZ LARA.

3. IT IS NOT CLEAR WHY GONZALEZ WAS UNABLE TO SECURE STRONGER SUPPORT. ONE EXPLANATION IS THAT GONZALEZ WAS FORCED TO COMMIT HIS FORCES SEVERAL DAYS EARLIER THAN CONTEMPLATED AND BEFORE HE HAD ALL HIS DUCKS IN A ROW. AS AN ARCHETYPAL "LATIN AMERICAN PALACE COUP," WE MAY SURMISE THAT HIS FAILURE DERIVED FROM A COMBINATION OF FACTORS: LACK OF PERSONAL ATTRACTIVENESS, THE APPARENT ALIGNMENT OF GONZALEZ WITH THE POLITICO/ECONOMIC RIGHT WING OF THE
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COUNTRY, AND THE COUNTER-PROMISES RODRIGUEZ LARA MADE TO GARNER SUPPORT. "THE PEOPLE", LIKE THE STARS, WERE INDIFFERENT. IF GONZALEZ EXPECTED A MASSIVE PUBLIC UPRISING, WHAT HE GOT WAS CROWDING ON THE HILLS SURROUNDING THE DOWNTOWN AREA, AS SPECTATORS VIED FOR VANTAGE POINTS FROM WHICH TO WATCH THE GLADIATORS GO AT EACH OTHER IN THE AREA IMMEDIATELY AROUND THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE.

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4. ALMOST AS IMPORTANT AS THE MILITARY JOUSTING WAS THE PRETEXT FOR THE COUP: MISMANAGEMENT OF THE ECONOMY, AND A FAILURE TO SUCCESSFULLY TACKLE THE FUNDAMENTAL ECONOMIC ILLS OF THE COUNTRY. IT HAD BEEN APPARENT FOR MANY MONTHS THAT THE RODRIGUEZ LARA REGIME, MISLED BY UNCOMPREHENDING (OR JUST PLAIN INCOMPETENT) ADVISERS, WAS ON THE POINT OF SERIOUSLY DAMAGING THE NATION'S ECONOMY. WITHIN THE PREVIOUS TWO WEEKS, MATTERS HAD COME TO A HEAD, AND IN FACING UP TO THE ECONOMIC "CRISIS", THE RODRIGUEZ GOVERNMENT HAD TAKEN A SERIES OF UNPOPULAR MEASURES WHICH ROUSED HOWLS OF PROTEST FROM THE IMPORTANT ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL SECTORS OF THE BODY POLITIC. DAY AFTER DAY IN THE TWO WEEKS PRECEDING THE COUP, PROMINENT ADVERTISEMENTS APPEARED IN ECUADOR'S NEWSPAPERS DENOUNCING THE IMPOSITION VIA DECREE 738 OF NEW IMPORT TAXES ON SO-CALLED "LUXURY GOODS"; THE GOVERNMENT'S IMPLEMENTATION OF ANDEAN PACT DECISION 24 (RESTRICTING FOREIGN INVESTMENT CAPITAL); ITS PETROLEUM POLICY; THE SWELLING BUREAUCRACY; THE LACK OF EFFECTIVE CONTROL OVER INFLATION; FAILURE TO PROGRESS IN

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THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR.

5. CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND SMALL INDUSTRIES DENOUNCED THE MEASURES, EDITORIALISTS FULMINATED, AND POLITICIANS AND POLITICAL PARTIES CRITICIZED. IN A WIDELY-PUBLICIZED MANEUVER, REPRESENTATIVES OF LEADING POLITICAL GROUPS (PRINCIPALLY THE VELASQUISTAS, CONSERVATIVES, SOCIALISTS, PONCISTAS, AND THE NATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY PARTY OF FORMER 043 8\$3NT CAROLOS JULIO ARESEMENA) JOINED IN FORMING A "CIVIC FRONT", INTENDED TO SPUR THE GOVERNMENT TOWARD A RETURN TO CONSTITUTIONAL RULE. CURIOUSLY, HOWEVER, FRANCISCO HUERTA'S LIBERAL RADICAL PARTY (MODERATE, DESPITE THE NAME) AND ASAAD BUCARAM'S CONCENTRATION OF POPULAR FORCES (BUCARAM MIGHT WELL HAVE BEEN THE WINNER IN THE ABORTED 1972 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS) WERE NOT PUBLICLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE CIVIC FRONT, ANDPHE FRONT DECLINED TO ACCEPT THE COMMUNIST PARTIES INTO THE FOLD ON GROUNDS THAT THEY WERE "GOVERNMENT PARTIES". PRIME MOVERS IN CREATING THE CIVIC FRONT WERE THE VELASQUISTAS; THE FRONT WAS THE ONLY QUASI-POLITICAL ORGANIZATION TO COME OUT IN SUPPORT OF THE GONZALEZ COUP ATTEMPT AT A TIME WHEN SUCH SUPPORRT MIGHT HAVE MADE A DIFFERENCE. PREDICTABLY, BOTH THE FRONT AND THE VELASQUISTAS TOOK IT ON THE CHIN WHEN THE COUP FAILED: JOSE JOAQUIN SILVA, THE FRONT'S DIRECTOR, PLUS OTHER FRONT MEMBERS PABLO DAVALOS DILLON, GILBERTO CONTRERAS NAVAS, CARLOS CORNEJO ORBE, UNIVERSO ZAMBRANO, AND JOSE VICENTE ORTUNO HAVE BEEN ARREFTRDZON OR ARE BEING LOOKED FOR, OR HAVE SOUGHT ASYLUM IN FOREIGN EMBASSIES, OR HAVE ALREADY DEPARTED THE COUNTRY UNDER SAFE-CONDUCT PASSES,

6. ACTIVITES OF THE FRONT NOTWITHSTANDING, RODRIGUEZ LARA HAD ALREADY CLEARLY RECOGNIZED THE PROBLEMS INTO WHICH THE NATION'S ECONOMY WAS HEADING, AND HAD BEGUN TO MOVE TOWARD A MORE PRAGMATIC STANCE IN DEALING WITH THEM. ONE RATHER INEPT BUREAUCRAT AND ONE IDEOLGUE (FORMER MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRIES RUBIO AND FORMER NATIONAL PLANNING CHIEF AGUAYO) HAD BEEN REPLACED WITH MODERATES FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR; THE PRICE OF ECUADOR'S PETROLEUM HAD BEEN MADE SLIGHTLY MORE COMPETITIVE; AND THE GOVERNMENT HAD RENEWED ITS COMMITMENT TO THE AGRICUGURE SECTOR IN AN EFFORT TO STEM RISING FOODSTUFFFS PRICES: AND OTHER, MORE SIGNIFICATN, MEASURES WERE REPUTEDLY IN THE SECRET

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WORKS.

7. IN ANY EVENT, IT WAS THE STATE OF THE ECONOMY WHICH PROVOKED THE OUTCRY AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT, AND IT WAS THE STATE OF THE ECONOMY THAT WAS USED BY GONZALEZ AS A PRIME PRETEXT TO TRY TO OVERTHROW RODRIGUEZ. PERHAPS GONZALEZ WAS SIMPLY A VICTIM OF HIS OWN IMAGINATION; HE READ THE CRITICISM IN THE NEWSPAPERS AND BELIEVED IT. HE ASSUREDLY

WAS ENCOURAGED BY A NUMBER OF CIVILIAN POLITICAL "OUTS", MANY ONSTHEM UNSCRUPULOUS AND AMBITIOUS FOR POWER. HE THOUGHT THESE FACTORS WOULD BE ENOUGH TO WIN HIM THE SUPPORT HE NEEDED TO TOPPLE RODRIGUEZ. THEY WERE NOT, ALBEIT POSSIBLY FOR REASONS OTHER THAN GONZALEZ' ANALYSIS OF THE ECONOMIC SITUATION.

8. DISCONTENT PERSISTS

WHAT DOES ALL OF THIS MEAN IN TERMS OF THE SURVIVABILITY OF THE RODRIGUEZ REGIME? THE OUTCOME OF THE COUP EFFORT WAS DETERMINED BY THE FACT THAT RODRIGUE WAS ABLE TO ELICIT (OR HAD ELICITED FOR HIM) THE OSTENSIBLE SUPPORT OF VIRTUALLY EVERY MAJOR MILITARY UNIT IN THE COUNTRY. TRUSTED AIDES, PRINCIPAL AMONB THEMMHIS THEN SECRETARY GENERAL FOR ADMINISTRATION, GEN. CARLOS AGUIRRE ASANZA; CHIEF OF THE JOINT GENERAL STAFF ADM. VASQUEZ; THE THREE SERVICE COMMANDERS; MINISTER OF GOVERNMENT GEN. DURAN; AND GUAQAS PROVINCE GOVERNOR GEN. SEMBLANTES--TOOK THE LEAD IN RALLYING UNITS WHICH COULD FIRST ISOLATE, AND THEN DEFEAT, GONZALEZ.

9. THERE IS ACCUMULATING EVIDENCE, HOWEVER, THAT THE SUPPORT RODRIGUEZ EVENTUALLY USED TO CRUSH THE COUP ATTEMPT WAS NOT SO SOLID AT THE BEGINNING, AND THERE CONTINUE TO BE REPORTS OF GREAT DISSATISFACTION WITH RODRIGUEZ AMONG THE OFFICERS CORPS. A PRIME EXAMPLE, AND SURELY NOT THE MOST SERIOUS IF ALL WERE KNOWN, IS THAT OF GENERAL RUBEN DARIO AYALA, THE FORMER COMMANDEG OF THE EL ORO BRIGADE AND GOVERNOR OF THAT PROVINCE, WHOM THE PRESIDENT HAS JUST NAMED AS MINISTER OF GOVERNMENT. AYALA'S DECLARATION OF SUPPORT FOR RODRIGUEZ ON THE MORNING OF SEPTEMBER 1 WAS QUALIFIED BY A STATEMENT THAT THE PRESIDENT WOULD
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HAVE TO CORRECT HIS POLICY ERRORS OF THE PAST. AND THERE ARE MANY RUMORS IMPLICATING OFFICERS IN THE PLANNING STAGES OF THE COUP WHO BELATEDLY DECLARED FOR RODRIGUEZ AFTER THE COUP WAS LAUNCHED. THERE UNDOUBTEDLY EXIST FEELINGS OF DISTRUST AND DIVISION WITHIN RODRIGUEZ' MAIN POWER BASE-- CHE ECUADOREAN ARMED FORCES. ADDITIONALLY, THERE IS TALK AMONG COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL PEOPLE ABOUT THE INEPTNESS OF MILITARY GOVERNMENTS IN MANAGING AN ECONOMY, AND POLITICIANS AND SOME NEWSMEN ARE COMPLAINING ABOUT THE FAILURE OF THE PRESIDENT TO SET SOME KIND OF FIXED SCHEDULE FOR A RETURN TO CONSTITUTIONAL AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT.

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10. THE PRESIDENT'S EFFORTS TO HEAL THE WOUNDS AND SECURE HIS POWER BASE.

RODRIGUEZ' REACTION TO ALL THIS COULD THEORETICALLY TAKE TWO MAJOR FORMS--A HARSH PURGE OF WHAT MAY HAVE BEGUN AS SUBSTANTIAL DISLOYALTY WITHIN THE MILITARY BUT ENDED AS (PERHAPS GRUDGING) SUPPORT; OR RECONCILIATION. THE GOE HAS MADE STRONG COMMENTS ABOUT PUNISHING REBEL OFFICERS BUT WE DO NOT BELIEVE IT WILL PERSIST IN THEM, EXCEPT PERHAPS FOR GONZALEZ, OF WHOM THE GOVERNMENT SAYS IT WILL SEEK EXTRADITION IF AS AN ASYLEE HE IS PERMITTED TO DEPART ECUADOR, AND ONE OR TWO OTHERS. VIOLENT REPRESSION, HOWEVER, IS NOT REALLY IN THE ECUADOREAN CHARACTER, NOR IN RODRIGUEZ' OWN MAKE-UP, AND RODRIGUEZ HAD ALREADY SHOWN SIGNS OF OPTING FOR RECONCILIATION WITH HIS CRITICS EVEN BEFORE THE COUP.

11. THE PRESIDENT'S NEW CABINET IS THE CLEAREST INDICATION OF HIS LIKELY COURSE. (SEE REF B) IT ACCENTUATES THE MILITARY NATURE OF THE RODRIGUEZ REGIME, IS BASICALLY MODERATE, AND,

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WHILE IT PLACES CERTAIN KEY MINISTRIES IN THE HANDS OF THE FAITHFUL, IT ALSO GIVES DUE WEIGHT TO THE NEED TO ACCOMMODATE CRITICISM. THE APPOINTMENT OF AYALA TO THE POWERFUL MINISTRY OF GOVERNMENT MAY BE EXEMPLARY NOT ONLY OF AN EFFORT TO ACCOMMODATE BUT ALSO TO CO-OPT POTENTIAL OPPOSITION WITHIN THE MILITARY. ANOTHER GESTURE OF PRESIDENT RODRIGUEZ TOWARD DISSIDENT MILITARY UNITS WAS HIS ALLOWING THE COLONEL WHO LED THE REBEL ATTACK AGAINST THE PALACE TO BE EVACUATED TO PANAMA FOR MEDICAL CARE OF WOUNDS SUFFERED IN THE THWARTED COUP.

12. PRONOUNCEMENTS FROM THE NEW GOVERNMENT HAVE LIKEWISE BEEN CONCILIATORY: THE REGIME WILL MODIFY DECREE 738 IMPOSING THE IMPORT TAXES, WHICH BROUGHT DOWN UPON IT THE WRATH OF THE COMMERCIAL/ECONOMIC SECTOR; IT WILL MODIFY ITS INTERPRETATION OF ANDEAN PACT DECISION 24 TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE NEEDS OF THE COUNTRY FOR FOREIGN PRIVATE INVESTMENT; IT WILL REMAIN A MEMZAR OF OPEN: BUT WILL SET THE COUNTRY'S PETROLEUM PRICES "IN ACCORDANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL MARKETING REALITIES"; IT WILL INCREASE ASSISTANCE TO THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR; AND SO ON.

13. APART FROM A HANDFUL OF POLITICAL FIGURES WHO ARE GOING INTO EXILE, POLITICALLY-MOTIVATED ARRESTS HAVE BEEN FEW. TWO IMPORTANT FIGURES WHO WERE INITIALLY PICKED UP HAVE SINCE BEEN RELEASED-- DIEGO OQUENDO, REPORTER AND TELE-NEBCASTER, AND ABDON CALDERON, LEADER OF ONE OF THE LARGEST POLITICAL PARTIES. ON THE EVENING OF SEPTEMBER 10, HOWEVER, ASSAD BUCARAM, LEADER OF THE CONCENTRATION OF POPULAR FORCES AND ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR POLITICAL FIGURES IN THE COUNTRY (ANATHEMA TO THE MILITARY BECAUSE OF HIS ALLEGEDLY "SOCIALIST" TENDENCIES, DISPLAYED WHEN HE WAS MAYOR OF GUAYAQUIL) WAS DETAINED, AND AT THE TIME OF THIS WRITING WAS IN AN UNKNOWN LOCATION. BUT IN ANOTHER UNUSUAL HUMANITARIAN GESTURE, PABLO DAVALOS DILLON, PROMINENT QUITO SURGEON AND INVETERATE PLOTTER, IN ASYLUM IN THE COLOMBIAN EMBASSY, WAS ALLOWED TO ATTEND THE FUNERAL OF HIS FATHER-IN-LAW AND THEN ESCORTED BACK TO THE COLOMBIAN EMBASSY PENDING GRANTING THE SAFE-

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CONDUCT PERMIT WHICH ALLOWED HIM TO LEAVE ECUADOR. A NUMBER OF OTHER PLOTTERS WHO HAD TAKEN REFUGE IN FOREIGN EMBASSIES HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY, SOME OF THEIR DEPARTURES PUBLICISED IN THE NEWSPAPERS, WITH

PHOTOGRAPHS OF SMILING, HAND-WAVING FAREWELLS AT QUITO'S INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT.

14. PROSPECTS FOR SURVIVABILITY. PRESIDENT RODRIGUEZ' EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE ECONOMY AND TO MOLLIFY CIVILIAN ELEMENTS ARE IMPORTANT, BUT CRUCIAL TO HIS CONTINUING IN POWER IS REGAINING THE CONFIDENCE AND SUPPORT OF THE ARMED FORCES. MOTIVATION FOR ANOTHER COUP EFFORT, AND SURELY ONE WHICH WOULD BE BETTER PLANNED AND EXECUTED, COULD DERIVE FROM PERSONAL ANIMOSITY AND/OR AMBITION, OR FROM A FEELING THAT RODRIGUEZ IS MISMANAGING THE ECUADOREAN MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT AND THE COUNTRY. IN THE LATTER INSTANCE, PLOTTERS COULD BE DRIVEN BY A DESIRE TO RETURN TO CIVILIAN AND CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT OR TO MOVE TOWARD A STATIST REVOLUTIONARY SOCIETY.

15. AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN ALL OF THIS WILL BE ECONOMIC RECOVERY. IF THE GOVERNMENT IS ABLE TO TAKE MEASURES RAPIDLY AND DECISELY THAT WILL TURN BACK ON THE INCOME FROM ECUADOR'S OIL RESERVES AND BOLSTER THE ECONOMY, THE PROSPECTS FOR RODRIGUEZ' CONTINUING IN POWER ARE IMPROVED, BUT STILL NOT ASSURED. AN AMBITIOUS REVOLUTIONARY, AS NOTED EARLIER, CAN ALWAYS FIND A PRETEXT FOR SAVING THE COUNTRY.

16. THE LONGER RODRIGUEZ STAYS IN POWER, THE BETTER HIS CHANCES, ESPECIALLY IF THE ECONOMY TAKES THE UPTURN IT SHOULD. THE MOST CRITICAL PERIOD IS PROBABLY THE NEXT SIX MONTHS. IF RODRIGUEZ LARA SURVIVES THIS PERIOD AND THE ECONOMY IMPROVES, HE MAY BE AROUND A WHILE LONGER. BREWSTER

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